

# Exhibit 19

ROY THOMAS' MERRY MARVEL  
COMICS FANTINE

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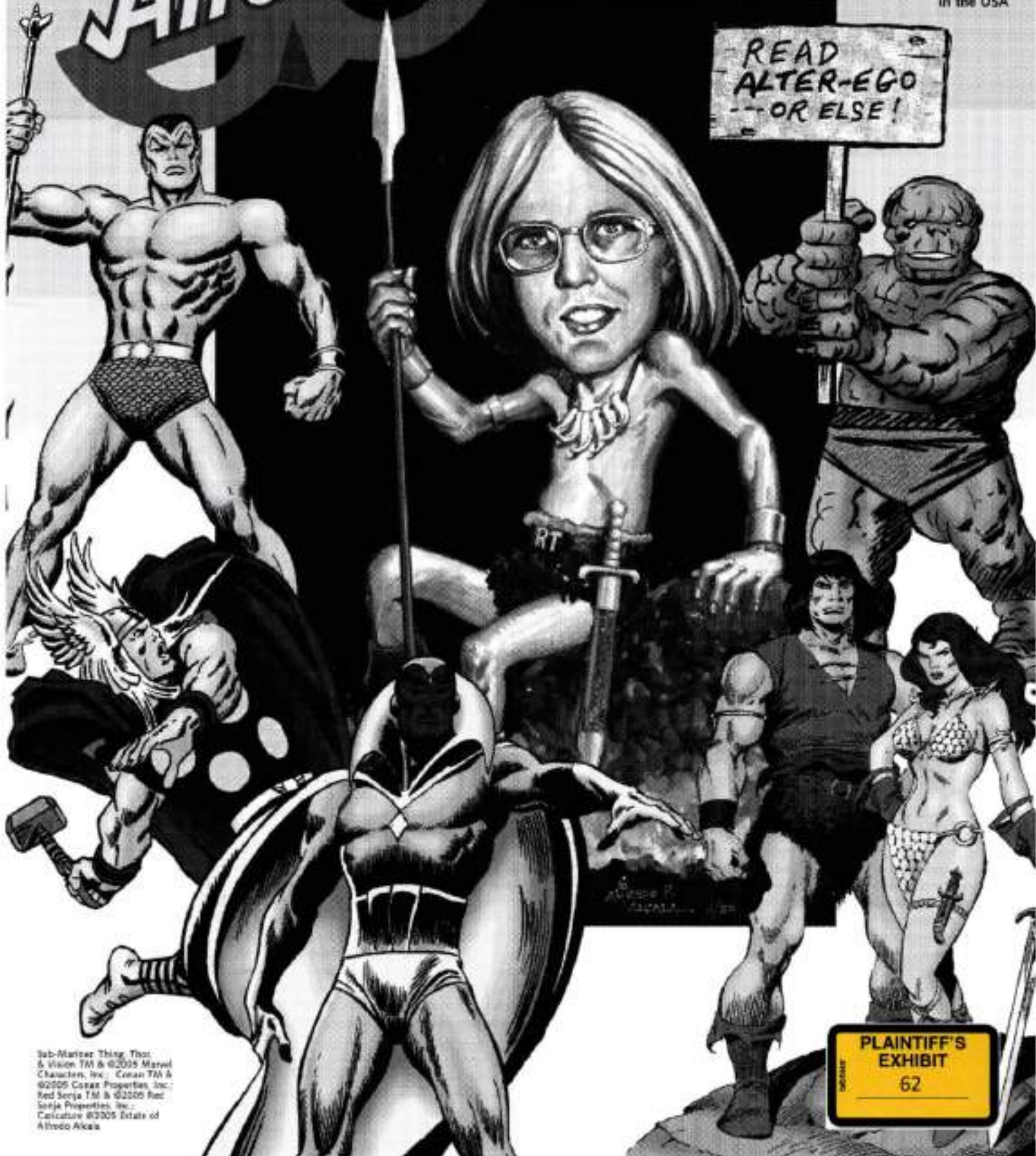
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## Ditko And Stan Lee Were Not On The Same Wavelength

As When you did those "Dr. Strange" stories, were you aware Ditko was about to quit?

THOMAS: No, I'd met him, and one of the first things I learned at Marvel was that Stan and Steve weren't speaking on each other. Steve just came in and dropped his stuff off with Sol, and then Stan dialogued it. By then, Steve was plotting both "Dr. Strange" and Spider-Man and getting credit for it. Outside the field, I doubt anybody knew there was friction between them, because neither the nor Stan would've leaked that to the fan press—and who else would've been interested? Somehow, by some sort of Daredevil radar sense, Stan never walked into Sol's office while Ditko was there. You'd think it might've happened just once by accident, but it never did.



### Strange But True . . .

Steve Ditko—and the splash of the two "Dr. Strange" stories dialogued by Roy (in *Strange Tales* # 421-424, April-May 1965). That "written and scripted" credit on #423, added by Stan, is mine; remarkably accurate. The Roy had to do a lot of reworking before The Man put his imprimatur on the story—but he earned a lot in the process. Photo of Ditko courtesy of Bill Sienk. (© 1999 Marvel Characters, Inc.)



### Legends At Loggerheads!

(Above) Steve Ditko's layouts for p. 3, panel 5, of "Just a Guy Named Just" in *Amazing Spider-Man* #30 (July 1966)—his first issue, he scripted and lettered before it was sent back to the artist for inking. A few lines have dropped out on our photocopy (supplied by David G. Hamilton), but this gives you a pretty fair idea of the art Stan dialogued from when Siodky looked a helluva lot in a heavily skin-tight costume. And Larry brings a tale of two major markers . . .

Originated in "What's Talkin' the Monster?" (#454, #36 (May '66), the silhouette (in layouts) of the villainous toadster looked a helluva lot like Spider-Man. Since both were permitting costumes. Accordingly, when Stan scripted the final panel on p. 12, he had to decide: did Steve mean that to be Spider-Man, hunting for the fled toadster—or was it the toadster himself? A long tirade? With no changing more from Steve, Stan wrote the figure as Spider-Man, and Archie Simak lettered it. When the story came back, however, Steve had inked the figure as The Toadster, apparently the character he'd intended it to be. At this point, of course, either the balloons or the figure had to be totally changed. Thus, Roy recalls lingering at the Marvel offices well after 5:00 p.m. one night the Monday night in 1966 and chatting about Eddie Brock with veteran artist Carl Hubbell (then inked *Amazing* #307) while the latter polystyrene transformed Toadster into Wall-Crawler in that panel. It wasn't a case of Stan being right and Steve wrong, or vice versa. But if there's a better illustration of the fact that Stan Lee and Steve Ditko weren't playing in the same ball park by the mid-1960s, Roy hopes someone will point it out to him. But it was a great team while it lasted! (© 1999 Marvel Characters, Inc.)





during those several months I was around.

In November or December, Ditko brought in pencils for one of his two series, and told Sol that he'd finish the episode of each hero that he was working on, and that would be it. Sol naturally went in and told Stan first, before he told me. I was sitting nearby, but hadn't eavesdropped on Steve's conversation with Sol.

**JA:** Did Stan have you and Denny O'Neil writing dialogue for "Dr. Strange" because he was trying to scale back, or because of the friction with Ditko?

**THOMAS:** Mostly because he wanted to scale back, because Stan never stopped loving Ditko's work. He just had to give something up, and *Strange Tales* was the book that sold the least well of any of the monthlies, no matter who drew "S.H.I.E.L.D."—Kirby or Steranko or whoever—and no matter who did "Dr. Strange." "Dr. Strange," beautiful as it was, was a less important feature than "Human Torch" or even "S.H.I.E.L.D." It was the only Marvel costumed-hero strip I hadn't always read as a fan. I'd always liked Ditko's artwork, starting with "Captain Atom" at Charlton, but I just wasn't into magicians. Now, of course, I realize I was nuts to read "Human Torch" and "Giant-Man," and not "Dr. Strange." But that's the way I was at the time, and I don't think I was alone in doing that.

**JA:** What was your understanding of the problem between Ditko and Stan?

**THOMAS:** Sol told me they'd argue about plotlines. I heard from either Sol or Stan, for instance, that Steve had wanted a major character to be crossing the street and get killed by a car. Stan mixed that idea because it didn't seem like drama to him, even though it was realistic. Steve might not remember that incident, or he might remember it differently. I've never talked to him about it.

I know Stan felt *The Green Goblin* should turn out to be somebody important to Spider-Man. He didn't want to repeat that bit with the man in the Crime Master's mask [*Amazing Spider-Man* #27], who turned out to be some nobody. I don't know if that had been Stan's idea or Steve's, but I know that as a reader I'd found it dramatically unfulfilling. Still, I appreciated the realism just because you take off a guy's mask doesn't mean you're going to recognize him. This shows that Stan and Steve were thinking increasingly differently. Stan was doing quite well editing and writing a whole line of comics, and Ditko was feeling his oats, too, because he knew he was doing good work, and people were responding to it. Certainly Stan liked it; everybody liked it. Yet, Ditko felt he and Stan weren't on the same wavelength. He was probably right.

I saw Steve only a few weeks after he quit, at a party at Dave Kaler's new place on the Upper West Side. I said to him, "I'm not spying for Stan, and I won't tell him what you say, but why did you quit?" All I remember from Steve's vague response is a sentence fragment: "Well, you know, when a guy's working against you..." I doubt if he meant Stan was consciously working against him, just that he felt Stan should leave things to him since he was plotting the book. At least that's how I interpreted it. Steve may not remember ever saying that, but I'll swear to my dying day that he did—those exact words. There wasn't anything I could say, so I didn't pursue the matter further. I had too much respect for Steve to press him.

At that stage, Stan felt he knew what was selling the Marvel comics, and I think he was right. He was willing to go along with a lot of what Steve wanted to do; otherwise, he wouldn't have let him plot the stories. He probably went along with a few things that were against his own instincts. But in other areas, he felt he had to dig in his heels and say no, because he was the editor. And "with great power, there must also come great responsibility." If Martin Goodman had suddenly noticed a title wasn't selling and asked Stan why he had done this or that, Stan couldn't reply that it was because the artist wanted to do it that way. Let me tell



#### Green Grows The Goblin

"Stan felt *The Green Goblin* should turn out to be somebody important to Spider-Man." And, of course, he did—Norman Osborn, to be precise—but by then, Shady Steve Ditko had walked and Jazzy Johnny Romita was drawing *The Amazing Spider-Man*. This sketch of the Goblin by J.R. is courtesy of the #1 Romita collector in the universe, Mike Burkley; see his buying-and-selling ads elsewhere in this very issue. [©2005 Marvel Characters, Inc.]

you, that would not have been sufficient excuse for Martin Goodman! It was just a case where two people couldn't compromise, and of course Stan had the authority. He used it with a light rein, but when he felt he had to use it, he did, just as anybody would. If you don't, why be an editor at all? "With great responsibility, there should also come great power." I made that up.

**JA:** In articles he wrote recently for Robin Snyder's newsletter *The Comics!*, Ditko says Stan is the one who stopped speaking to him, not the reverse.

**THOMAS:** It probably was Stan, because Ditko didn't have the authority to do that: he was an artist bringing work in to an editor who's his superior in the company. If it was Stan's decision, he probably felt that was the only way the two of them could go on working together. Maybe it would've worked better if Stan had gone on trying to talk to Steve, but it's hard to say in retrospect, because nothing had ever existed quite like the working relationships between Stan and Steve and Jack. It was a somewhat different arrangement than comics was used to. I won't say it had never existed before, but it was relatively rare.

**JA:** When you dialogued those "Dr. Strange" episodes, did Ditko provide any marginal notes or writing of any kind?

**THOMAS:** I'm sure he did, but I believe they were sketchy. His pencils were very loose, too—not much more than stick figures—because he



was going to finish them in the inking. I'm sure there were notes, not just the art, because Stan wanted the artists to tell what was going on, to avoid misinterpretation. Jack, of course, got in the habit of writing more and more in the margins. Stan would take what he wanted from that, and felt no obligation to take any more. I think the same was true with Steve.

JA: I had wondered about that, because I don't recall ever seeing Ditko's notes on the originals. I think that Ditko has at some point said that he wrote his notes on separate pieces of paper.

THOMAS: I don't recall getting separate pieces of paper, but I only worked with him twice at that stage, so I don't recall.

## "Just Show Me The First And Last Page Of Any Story You Write"

JA: What were your early impressions of Stan? How much of the personality that he put into the comics did you see when you started working for him?

THOMAS: Well, in private he didn't talk like a "Bulpen Bulletin." He was very aware of having a public persona, the same way a performer would. You wouldn't expect a comedian to be cracking jokes every second in private conversation. Whatever sort of public face he put on things—about this being fun, or that being great—he also had to be taken seriously as an editor, and you can't joke your way through that.

JA: We've heard stories about Stan sitting in his office in the '40s and playing some kind of flute while he was editing the line. I've gotten the impression that, by the '60s, he was more serious in the office.

THOMAS: I never saw him play any musical instrument, not even a kazoo. [Tom laughs] Right after I started working for him, I was walking around



### The Man Without Peer

When Wally Wood (left) became the artist on *Daredevil* with #5 (Dec. 1964), a thrilled Stan trumpeted his arrival on the splash with unabashed pride. Their short-lived collaboration produced seven issues of as breathtakingly beautiful comic art as ever blessed the Man without Fear—and, considering other early DD artists included Bill Everett, Joe Orlando, John Romita, Jack Kirby, and Gene Colan, that's saying something! Photo courtesy of Richard Pryor. [Art ©2005 Marvel Characters.]



### Millie And Me

(Above & left) Stan Goldberg, a.k.a. "Stan G.," from that oh-so-handy 1963 F.E. Annual—and his splash for *Modeling* with Millie #44 (Dec. 1963), the first issue scripted by Roy T. Unfortunately, neophyte Roy failed to indicate credits on the story—and Stan forgot to add any, as well, while rewriting Roy's dialogue. They forgot the logo, too! But hey—at least R.T. corrected the grammar of the Anthony Newley song "Who Can I Turn to?" from which he took the title! Inker uncertain. Photo courtesy of Stan G. [Art ©2005 Marvel Characters, Inc.]



Manhattan one night with my new friend Len Brown, who worked for Topps Bubble Gum. He and Wally Wood had worked together on the famous *Mary Attacks!* card series, and Len had just written the first couple of "Dynamo" stories for Wally at Tower. Wally had quit drawing *Daredevil* a few weeks before, and Len told me how horrible Wally claimed Stan was... including that old story about him standing on top of a file cabinet years ago and throwing all the staffers' checks up in the air so they'd have to scramble for them. I said, "Y'know, I haven't seen any of that. Maybe he and Wally just didn't get along."

Naturally, it's too bad that Stan and some of the best artists in the business—Wood, Kirby, Ditko—came to eventual partings of the ways, but that doesn't pin down whose "fault" it is. They also produced a lot of good work together before parting. Partnership is a hard thing, as I always say.

JA: Yeah, and when your partner is also your boss, I guess that can cause friction.

THOMAS: Yeah, that was part of the problem between Barry Smith and me later. I thought of us as friends, and I'd gone out of my way to get Barry work. Later on, from